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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001988

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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/GAERC: DUTCH VIEWS ON JULY 18-19 GAERC

REF: THE HAGUE 01073

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Nathaniel Dean for reasons 1.  
4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. Poloff participated in the Dutch pre-briefing for the GAERC to be held in Brussels on July 18-19. It will emphasize the fight against terror, in light of the recent London bombings. On Lebanon and Syria, the Dutch believe the situation in Lebanon is "very fragile" and that the international community should place more pressure on Syria to reduce its influence over the Lebanese. On Iran, the Dutch are skeptical over the extent to which the new president in Iran will carry any credibility. The Dutch may be becoming more hesitant on Turkish accession to the EU; the Dutch parliament will discuss the Commission's draft negotiations framework soon after the opening of its next session August 29. The Dutch acknowledged that the June 30 deadline regarding the Andijon incident had passed and affirmed that the EU would employ a gradual policy of "carrots and sticks" as a way to induce Uzbekistan's cooperation. Finally, the Dutch lamented the situation in Zimbabwe, fearing the African Union will not make independent progress. End Summary.

#### FIGHT AGAINST TERROR

12. (C) Adriaan Palm (MFA, Office of Political Affairs) and Jochem Wiers, (MFA, European Integration Office) briefed Poloff and reps from Australia and Japan July 14 on the upcoming GAERC. In light of the London bombings on July 7, Palm said that the upcoming GAERC would place a larger focus on the fight against terrorism than had been initially planned. They would discuss deeper cooperation with those countries the EU already works closely with, including Morocco, Nigeria and Indonesia.

#### SYRIA/LEBANON: A FRAGILE SITUATION

13. (C) Palm said UN Special Representative of the SYG Larson will brief the GAERC on recent developments. Palm stressed that Lebanon is in a very fragile situation since the recent elections, and that the EU believes it is very important to support Lebanon's transition process as much as possible. Palm underscored that Syria remains a concern. Although Syria has withdrawn its troops from Lebanon, "it has not necessarily withdrawn all of its influence," he said. Palm cautioned that the presence of the Palestine Hezbollah in Syria makes it important for EU to keep pressure on Syria, e.g., maintaining tight control along the Syrian/Iraqi border. He implied that Syria should be pressed to cooperate more with the international community in this regard.

#### IRAN: SKEPTICISM OVER NEW GOVERNMENT

14. (C) Palm questioned whether the new presidency in Iran would affect the nuclear standoff, stating that the previous president was not very influential, with the Ayatollah Khomeini pulling the strings. Noting that the Iranians may send a new negotiator to the Vienna talks, Palm confided that he believes the Iranians would do so to push the EU into giving a better deal. Palm said that the EU3 will present a new proposal sometime in July-August to Iran, adding that the GONL would wait and see how the Iranians react to the proposal. "We'll have to judge Iran by deeds, not by words," he said.

#### EU ENLARGEMENT

15. (C) a) Turkey: Palm said that the EU council members must agree on the negotiations framework by October 3, the date of the next official GAERC. Palm said on July 18-19 there will be a generalized discussion of the framework but no decision will be taken. Indeed, Palm said, "we want to have a proper discussion of this with our own parliament," which is currently in recess until August 29. Wiers (a veteran of the December 17 Council meeting that decided to invite Turkey to negotiate EU membership) said that on first impression the Commission document appears to be "a good and balanced mandate," as it closely follows the December 17 conclusions. Palm said the mood in parliament was split over Turkey, and that the issue of Cyprus raises a "big chunk of questions." In general, Palm said there are two conditions parliament will consider for Turkish accession: (1) the entry

into force of new Turkish legislation; and (2) signing the protocol to the Ankara agreement. In this regard, the Dutch note with concern that the Turkish side still seems to demand attaching a unilateral declaration against recognizing Cyprus, in which case the EU would be forced to issue a counter declaration.

b) Croatia: Austria is isolated supporting the opening of Croatia negotiations now. The Dutch expect the GAERC not to discuss Croatia pending the next ICTY report.  
WTO

16. (C) Palm said that France has added WTO to the agenda, to discuss the situation with China.

#### MIDDLE EAST

17. (C) Palm observed that preparations for the Gaza withdrawal are proving difficult, especially maintaining order and economic and political stability. Stability would depend on the reopening of the Palestine airport and the reconstruction of the harbor. Palm lamented, "It's all difficult and hard to make progress," as there is also still the problem of the withdrawal of Israeli settlers. Palm stressed the importance of intensifying collaboration between the Palestinians and Israelis, the implementation of the roadmap, and ensuring the economic survival of the Gaza strip. Palm emphasized, "We should signal that the construction of the wall in Jerusalem does not help," implying the need to encourage Israel to reconsider its position on the wall.

#### UN HIGH LEVEL EVENT

18. (C) Palm stated that the GoNL wants the final HLE document to "maintain its ambition and balance," with strong text regarding African development, the Human Rights Commission, streamlining the UN system, and the fight against terror. The Australian representative inquired if the Security Council issue could be looked at separately from these issues. Palm stated that the Security Council issue "has been quarantined." He also made clear that there was no unified EU position on the Security Council issue, while on most other issues there was an EU consensus.

#### EU-CHINA SUMMIT

19. (C) Palm said the upcoming September 5 summit in Beijing will discuss economic and political issues. He asserted the EU will not lift the arms embargo under the UK presidency. (He noted that three issues occupy the EU in this matter: the tool box, the code of conduct, and the opinion of the USG and Japan.) He speculated on how the "market economy status" discussion will proceed, as the UK wants to "go the extra mile" while the rest of the EU expressed concerns over China's fulfillment of the criteria. Palm said that the declaration on environment and climate change (especially emissions reductions) is clearly deliverable, as it is "in everyone's interest."

#### UZBEKISTAN

10. (C) Palm acknowledged that the June 30 deadline for Uzbek cooperation in an international investigation of the Andijon incident has passed. He listed three steps for the EU to take in response: reduce ministerial contacts and cease bilateral contacts, refrain from deepening cooperation agreements with Uzbekistan, and attempt to implement the OSCE Moscow Mechanism (which requires OSCE support). He speculated that an arms embargo could come but emphasized that the EU would favor "a gradual buildup of carrots and sticks." Palm stressed the importance of making sure the refugees in Kyrgyzstan are treated in accordance to international human rights principles.

#### ZIMBABWE

11. (C) Palm decried the fact that the "Operation to restore order and get rid of trash" resulted in 300,000 people losing their homes. He called it a "new step in the direction of a complete denial of human rights." He regretted that new sanctions could have been taken but that there probably was not much support for it at the time and was clearly disappointed that some in the EU wanted to wait for the report from the UN special representative. Palm feared the African Union would be unable to take the lead effectively.

#### COMMENT

12. (C) Palm seemed uncommitted to Turkey accession, distancing his tone and body language from his talking points, whereas Wiers seemed more optimistic. When the Japanese representative returned to the China arms embargo, Palm said that the Dutch feel there is no reason to lift it now and that it is not likely to happen under the UK presidency.

